

## What You Should Know

As a telephone customer, you should be aware that repairs and maintenance to telephone wiring inside your home are your responsibility. Your telephone service provider is responsible for the Network Interface Device (NID), also called the *Demark*, and any outside wiring. The NID is a gray box located on the outside of the building where the telephone service is provided.

If you are experiencing problems with your telephone service, check the line before calling your local telephone service provider. If there is:

- No dial tone on any telephones -- Locate the NID which contains a test jack. Plug a working telephone into the test jack. If there is a dial tone, then the problem is most likely a telephone set, jack, equipment, or inside wiring. If there is no dial tone, the problem may be the telephone line

outside and you should contact your local telephone service provider.

- Dial tone on some, but not all, telephones -- Plug a non-working telephone into a working jack. If there is no dial tone, then the problem is the telephone set. If there is a dial tone, then the problem probably involves inside wiring or a telephone jack.

If you report a telephone problem that the company finds to be on the customer's side of the NID, you may be charged a fee. This flat fee may appear on your bill as a trip fee, trouble determination fee, or service charge.

Some telephone service providers offer a plan to cover inside wiring that would prevent being charged this fee. Names for such a plan include: *Inside Wire Maintenance Plan*, *Home Maintenance Plan*, and *Inside Wire Protection Plan*. The cost of subscribing to this plan

usually appears as a monthly fee on your telephone bill.

The amount of coverage a plan offers varies by telephone company. Make sure you understand how the plan works. For example, some plans prevent being charged a flat fee if the problem is inside wiring; however, they may not cover the cost of repairs. If you subscribe to a plan, contact your telephone service provider to make sure you understand how the plan works.

Your telephone service provider may also offer a plan that covers problems with your telephone equipment. Such a plan may be referred to as an *Equipment Maintenance Plan* or *Telephone Protection Plan*. The cost of subscribing to this plan also typically appears as a monthly fee on your telephone bill. Contact your telephone service provider for more information.



# Office of Regulatory Staff

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## Contact Us

The Office of Regulatory Staff can be reached several ways:

**By Phone:**

803-737-5230 (Columbia, S.C.)

1-800-922-1531 (toll-free in S.C.)

Hearing and Speech Impaired

803-737-5175 TTY (Columbia, S.C.)

1-800-334-2217 TTY (toll-free in S.C.)

**By Fax:** 803-737-4750

**By Internet:** [www.regulatorystaff.sc.gov](http://www.regulatorystaff.sc.gov)

**Hours:** 8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday  
(closed state holidays)

## About the ORS

The S.C. Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) was created in 2004 by the S.C. General Assembly.

The ORS represents the public interest of South Carolina in utility regulation with regard to rates, charges, service standards, facilities, and practices of the major utility industries - electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water/wastewater, and transportation - before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (PSC), the court system, the S.C. General Assembly, and federal regulatory bodies. The ORS has responsibility for oversight of railroad safety and natural gas pipeline safety in the state.

In fulfilling this mission, the ORS strives to balance the concerns of the using and consuming public, the financial integrity of public utilities, and the economic development of South Carolina.

## Telephone Maintenance:

### Your Responsibilities as a Customer



## Information for Consumers